

NEWSLETTER

January – February – March 2011

Volume Twelve Number One



SKETCHLEY COTTAGE

Linking yesterday with tomorrow

PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

They Were Here Vol 1	\$ 35
They Were Here Vol 2	\$ 40
War Memorials of the Port Stephens Area	\$ 25
Raymond Terrace History & Heritage	\$ 25
Marriages from the Gloucester Examiner & Raymond Terrace Examiner 1894 – 1926	\$ 15
Clearing Out Sales Raymond Terrace & Lower Hunter 1895 – 1930	\$ 15
Soldiers & Memorials of Seaham	\$ 25
Raymond Terrace Pioneer Register	\$ 30
Cemetery Master Index	\$ 25
Landholders & Others	\$ 15
Raymond Terrace Pioneer Cemetery	\$ 5
Obituary Books Vol 1 1893 – 1915	
Vol 2 1916 – 1925	
Vol 3 1926 – 1930, 1951 & 1953	

Buy any two volumes of Obituaries for \$45 or all three publications for \$65. Purchased individually the Obituary Books cost \$25.

We also have available for sale a large selection of publications not produced by the Society but covering the local district among them are:

Seaham School of Arts	\$ 15
Short History of Raymond Terrace	\$ 5
Wades Corn Flour Mill 1878-1902	\$ 10

All prices exclude postage

SKETCHLEY COTTAGE MUSEUM is located opposite Bettles Park, Raymond Terrace and is open to the public on Sundays 10am to 3pm other times by appointment. Bus groups are most welcome, please contact the Secretary to arrange a date and time.

The Society's **RESEARCH ROOMS** are located in the Port Stephens Library, cnr William & Port Stephens Streets, Raymond Terrace

Open Monday & Wednesday
9.30 am to 2 pm - other times by appointment

Membership of the Society is open to everyone with an interest in Local and Family History.

Joining Fee \$2.00 Concession \$15.00 Full Membership \$20.00
Family \$25.00 Monthly Meetings are held on the third Friday of the month at Senior Citizens Building, Raymond Terrace at 7.00 pm.



The Founding of Australia, 26 January
1788, by Captain Arthur Phillip R.N.
Sydney Cove.

[http://www.city-
data.com/forum/history/854697-dav-](http://www.city-data.com/forum/history/854697-dav-)

**RAYMOND TERRACE & DISTRICT
HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.
PO BOX 255
RAYMOND TERRACE NSW 2324**

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COMMITTEE:

David Gunter	Laurel Young
Moira Saunderson	Helen Giggins

DATES FOR THE DIARY

February	7	Committee Meeting
	18	General Meeting – held at Senior Citizens building
March	1	Committee Meeting
	18	General Meeting
	26	GARAGE SALE AT SKETCHLEY COTTAGE
April	4	Committee Meeting
	14	Heritage Week – Stories of the Rivers 9am-Noon
	15	General Meeting
May	2	Committee Meeting
	20	General Meeting
June	6	Committee Meeting
	17	General Meeting

LIBRARY NEWS

NEW ACQUISITIONS:

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nothing to Sleep but a Poor Tent and a little grass to Sleep on — Several of the convicts have Run away — one or two of them have Come back having been to Botany Bay to See if the French Ships which we left there would take them but the[y] would [not] — I hope the Governour will make an Example of Some of them — Sent for Stephen Mullot and gave him a glass of Rum and water on our dear Aunt Hawkings Sake — my Belove Betsey gave also one Smith what I left at dinner because he came from dock and Know Aunt Hawkings — Meridith came over and Staid with me and then Sent me my dinner — the[y] are getting up the Govenours House as fast as the[y] can.

Tuesday 5 February-Nothing Exstrordinary my dr. wife — the[y] are clearing the ground as fast as they can.

Friday 8 February-Capt. Shea Kild to day one of the Kankeroos it is the most curiest of animals that I ever Saw — confined one of the convicts for Stricking John West one of the drummers and abusing the Drum Major — the Same weather thunder and lightening.

Saterdag 16 February-went out a Shooting Soon after Breakfast and Took Copl. Goff with me who was very near blowing his hand of as I gave him my Fuze to Shoot with — in firring at a Cocka Too it burst in the Barral but thank God it did not hurt him — I only Shot one Cocka Too — the[y] are most beautiful bird — I hope to God to be able to get Some alive to carry home with me for you my dear wife — after dinner went in the boat with Meridith up the harbour and Shot a few Parrokits — went to bed Early.

Munday 18 February-was very ill with the Tooth eack all last night — got up early and went to the Hospital and had it puld out Buy Mr. Consident — oh my God what pain it was it was So fast in and the Jaw bone very fast to one of the prongs the Tooth would not come out without breacking the Jaw bone which he did — I thought that half of my head would have come off — there is a piece of the Jaw bone remaining to the Tooth — the Pain was So great my dear wife that I fainted away and was very ill the remainder of the day but I could not let Consident report to Majr. Ross that I was ill but would goe on Picket — my gum Keep Bleeding all the day.

Friday 29 February-the Criminal Court Still Sitting Since Wednesday and trying the 3 three men for Stealing the wine Munday⁴ and two others for Stealing 15 allowances of flouer — Geoe. Wittiker, Danl. Gordon and Jno. Williams two black men — the former wair aquited of the charge about the wine but the two later Received Centance of death and to Suffer at four oClock this Evening —Pardond on Condition - I think after his goodness the[y] ought to behave now well but I am almost certain that before I am a fortnight older Some of them will be brought to tryal for Capital offences.

From University of Sydney site

<http://setis.library.usyd.edu.au/firstfleet/index.html>

Notes from the Secretary

- The Society welcomes 4 new members. Fay Fenn – who helps out in the research room at the library, and travelled to the Central Coast to attend the recent Conference day. Don Austin and Mike and Pam Fibbens who attend the general meetings and have been helping out with Cottage Duty and with bus tours. Their interest and enthusiasm is greatly appreciated.
- It was good to see Sue Sokolff looking a lot better after her recent surgery. We all wish her a speedy recovery
- Visitors at the Cottage from the cruise ship Rhapsody of the Seas, were impressed with the exhibits at the Cottage. They were mainly American tourists – one fellow said he would like to be able to stay all day to have a good look around. Many were eager to take a brochure to show their fellow passengers what they had missed out on by not taking the history tour.
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We are nothing without our history, and our records, lay testament to who we are as a people. Gionni Di Gravio

HERITAGE WEEK – 2011

The theme for Heritage Week is “Amazing Stories of the River” . With this in mind, an event has been arranged . Hope you can come along.

RAYMOND TERRACE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PRESENTS A **MORNING OF HISTORY** DURING **HERITAGE WEEK**

AMAZING STORIES OF THE TWIN RIVERS

Hear stories of the HUNTER and WILLIAMS RIVERS from ancient times through to the present. AMAZING STORIES of transport, farming, floods, boat building and life on the rivers. An entertaining morning of history through stories, songs, poetry and pictures. Bring your amazing story to share as well.

WHEN: Thursday 14 April, 2011 **9am – 12 noon**

COST: \$ 5 (includes morning tea)

WHERE: Senior Citizens Hall, Irawang Street, Raymond Terrace. (Transport available if needed – ph 49876435)

which I otherwise Should if I did not keep watch according to orders — at 6 in the morning Saw the two Strange Ships comming but find that there are french by there coulours but cannot Say Where from the[y] were last or where the[y] are bound too but Suppose that the[y] are the Ships that Sailed on discoveries from france — at 8 oClock gott under way as did all the Ships and the two French Ships came to an Anchor — the[y] are much larger than any of our[s] — both kings Ships the one having a broad pennent and the other a comon at the M T G M H — little wind in the narrows going out there being little wind and the place very narrow and the wind Quite against use — the Prince of Wales and us got foul of each other they carried away our Jibb Boom but what dammage we did her I cannot Say as I did not lick it I was affraid that we would both have being driven on Shore as the blow fresh — Soon after the Charlotte ran foul of use and Shooke use very much — I was more frightend than I was When the prince of Wales was foul of use — if it had not being by the greatest good luck we Should have been both on Shore on the rocks and the Ships must must have been all lost and the greater part if not the whole on board drownd for we Should have gone to pices in less than a half of an hour but how good the Almighty is to use — I return him my most Sincer prayers for his Kindness to use — thank god we have got clear out as hav all the Ships and hope to be in the course of a few hours at Port Jackson as it is a fine fair Breeze — as we run along the Shore Saw a great number of fress and a few Natives — blessed be to God that we have got Save to ane Anchor in one of the finest harbours in the world — I never Saw any like it — the River Thames is not to be mentioned to it and that I thought was the finest in the world — this Said port Jackson is the most beautiful place — I cannot compair any think to come nearer to it than about 3 miles above Saltash to the Wair — here we make the Ships fast to the Trees on Shore both sides of Governours Cove — we are about 5 miles from the entrance — found all the Ships here at anchor.

Munday 28 January-Got up early this morning and Sent all the Convicts on Shore except them that were Sick — thank God that the[y] are all out of the Ship hope in God that I will have nothing to doe with them any more — at 10 Debarkt with all the [other?] Marines and there Baggage Except my own — I never Saw So much confusion in all the course of my life as there was in the three compys. disembark — after I had Pitchd it twice but thank God I Slept very well but reather col

Tuesday 29 January-got early this morning and had nothing for Breakfast Except a Pice of Biscuit and a drink of cool water — remarkably hott

Thursday 31 January-what a Terrible night it was last of thunder lighting and Rain — was obliged to get out of my tent with nothing one but my shirt to Slacking the tent Poles — dreamt of You my dear Sweet woman and that I was in bed with you and that I dreamt also that I was very Angry with You and that I wanted to run Kempster throu for a Breach of Friendship — remarkably hott have

. **Munday the 3th.**- a very fine Breeze all night — the two Ships a great way a head of use we have got more Sail Set to day than we have had at any one time

Since I have been in the Ship —— Latt in to day 40–38 South —— went by the Log last 24 hours 164 miles —— thirty Such runs as this I think that we shall not be a great Way from Botany —— I wish it was to Plymouth dear Sweet place wher all my happiness my Soul and tendrest Love is centered —— 1 oClock it blows pretty fresh —— 4 oClock I think that it will from appearance blow fresh if not hard to night —— Several of Mother carrys chickins flying a bout —— gave ½ Pint of Rum to the Ships cook.

Tuesday the 1 January 1788-This being New Years day my beloved Alicia I wish You and our dr. boy maney maney happy Returns of the day —— trust in God that he will defend you my Sinceer friend and Amiable wife from all Perils and dangers Preserve You in health and welfare and that of our dear Ralph who is Sweet as the Bloom of Spring is the most Sinceer wish of your dr. and fond husband —— this is the first new Year that I have been away from You hope it will be the last but why doe I hope So when I am certain I must be two or three a way longer —— oh I wish I had never come —— it blows very hard and the wind has headed use very much —— went by the log last 24 hours 168 miles —— Latt in 44–00 South —— it is now 1 oClock and I am going to sit down to the Poorest dinner that ever I Sat down too on a New Years day a pice of hard Salt Beef and a few musty Pancakes and You my Beloved wife wont be out of Bed these 3 hours it not being 5 oClock in the morning in England yet there being more than Eight hours difference —— gave to the men one Quart one pint and a half Pint of Rum it being New Years day to drink your and Ralphes health ast 24 hours 160 miles.

Saterdag 12 January-It blow in the Night Remarkable hard —— Split to pices our main Stay Sail —— dreamt that Majr. Foster was dead and that Mrs. F was going to be married to Capt. Cumings —— that God the wind is much more favourable and it dont blow to So hard nor So great a Sea —— could hardly Sleep for the Ships rolling for she did roll most Tremendously —— it is Quite a fine day got up our TG Yards which we were oblige to get down Yesterday —— the Scarborough haild use and askd use how we all did and found them the Same as we very well —— hope to be at Botany bay by Tuesday next if the wind Stands —— Latt in to day 39–14 South

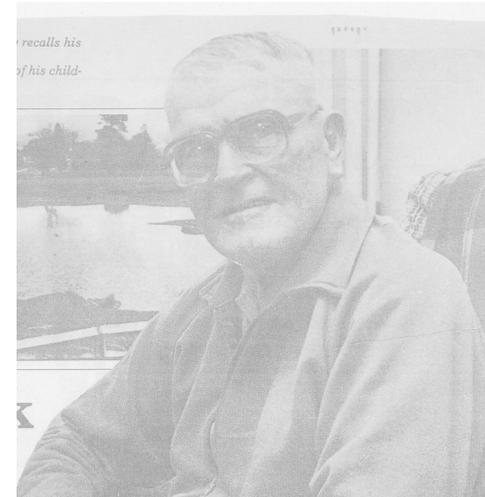
Munday 21 January-a very fine day —— Capt M and Mr. F went fishing at day light and Staid all day —— Lieut J Johnstone came on board with order for me to goe on Shore with a Party of Men consisting of ten and Sergt. and brought with him four tents which I am to pitch by day light and to See the orders put in force for which See the orderly Book —— caught but very little fish —— it is remarkably hott what must it be on Shore if it is So here.

Saterdag 26 January-had the first and Morning watch last night —— Since it is Majr. Ross's orders that the officers Shall keep watch I am resolved to keep it —— let others doe as they think proper for I should not wish to get into any Scrape

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STORIES OF BOOMERANG PARK

Story from Port Stephens Examiner 28 June 1989



Eighty-two year old **Jack Simons, of Nelson Bay**, fondly recalls his boyhood in Raymond Terrace. Many boys learnt to swim in the old quarry, much to the annoyance of our parents.

One day Ray Brown's mother came and took our clothes and we were left chasing her down the hill in the nude.

We played cricket on the concrete wicket there. This was a good cricket ground with a park rail fence to mark the boundary. It was the scene of many good matches played in the local competition and then later in the Maitland competition. A team from as far as Walarobba came on Boxing Day and other holidays to play the Terrace.

An annual event was the match between the Terrace and a few ring-ins and the mighty Waverley team from Sydney. One notable occasion comes to memory was a sparkling century and more which was scored by one Fossberg of Waverley, a top line cricketer of his time in the Sydney competition. I can remember when he scored his century he was hitting the ball over the pine trees which were on part of the boundary of the oval. He offered to retire but then the locals wouldn't have it and insisted on getting him out which they eventually did by one way or other.

There was always a sports day on Show Day. Foot racing for the youthful, tent pegging for the light horse unit, breaking bottles with stones – the bottles were hung in rows on strings and heaps of stones nearby. Pig with a greasy tail was one popular event. I can remember that on one occasion a large group of pursuers chased the pig all over Muree and down over Stroud Road and caught him up on the Richardson Hill. Frank Pepper got the pig because, as he said “ they were all buggered and so was the pig so they all fell down on him.

As well as all this there was one or two horse races conducted on the straight along the south western fence. Then there was always an artillery unit from Newcastle and they galloped round with a field gun, dismantled it then reassembled it and then rammed a charge in the barrel and fired. I was always intrigued by the rings which floated in the air after firing.

The people came from near and far to enjoy these days and it was always hard to break away when some had to go home to milk before dark.

Then of course we mustn't forget the light horsemen who carried out their manoeuvres on the park land – as a matter of fact it seemed to me that they galloped all over the whole countryside. Of course there was Colonel Meredith, Colonel Richardson and Major Eddie Windeyer, Rees James, Hopkins, and David James and quite a number of other locals in the Terrace light horse unit.

I would say with certainty that the park is the only place in the Terrace where a plane has landed and taken off again. A Captain Robinson landed an Avro biplane there in about 1919 and was barnstorming, as it was called – he later crashed at Gloucester and was killed.

The old park has had its sad times too as the funerals wound over the hill to the cemetery. I can see now the corteges conducted by Mr Charles Boots in top hat and tails walking in front of the hearse and Sonny driving the horse drawn hearse, winding over the hill. Mr Boots always walked in front accompanied by the officiating cleric all the way to the cemetery. The horses never broke into a trot either. Invariably Percy Boots opened and closed the big white gate at the top of William Street.

It is not quite the same to me now some changes have taken place but it is still one of my sacred places. I hope that Boomerang Park (and Quarry Hill) will always be the same. It still smells the same to me

Friday the 3 August -got up early to serve the water to all hands on board —— the land very near use but will not get into port as it is quit calm and very likly to remain So —— Sarah McCormick taking very ill this after noon —— the doctor has been oblige to Bleed her twice to day and Says that She will not live the night out —— She is now quit Speachless I am apt to think (God forgive) if it is not So, that She is eating up with the P . . . She is on them that went throu the Bulk head to the Seamen —— I hope She has given them some thing to remember her —— never was ther a Set of greater rascals together than the[y] are —— the[y] are ten thousand times wors than the convicts and if the convicts had any thought to make ther escapt the[y] would assist them

Friday the 17 August-Capt M. went in his little boat a fishing he Soon after returned to dinner —— Jo. Johnston from the Alexander came on board to See me and lent him two Vol: of Magazines —— I wanted him to Stay dinner but he would not —— gave yesterday to one of the convict women all my dirty Linnen to wash —— Lieut Long came on board with orders to release Tho. Catherall one of the Corps. whom I confined for neglect of duty and disobedience of order and for the remainder of the orders See the orderly book to this date —— a nasty rain day —— intend going a shore if it clears up

Tuesday the 25 September-it blowd very hard all night and the Ship rould her Gunwale under Several times and a great dele of water went between decks and washt the marines out of ther beds and the Convict Women all the thing rouling about —— thank god that the wind is fair and is going right before it other wise Should be in my bed very Sick perhaps —— all the ships in Company —— it now Blows very hard and a great dele of hail falls as it did last night —— no observation to day —— the Sick the Same as before except one convict man more —— went Since Yesterday 12 oClock untill to day noon 133 miles

Munday October the 1st.-went to bed last night at 9 oClock but could not get any Sleep for Capt. M: and the doctor Sat up untill past 1 oClock in the morning drinking and was Exceedingly hurt for the[y] keep Signing althoug it was the Lords day which was very wrong of them —— they would not let Faddy and self Sleep because we would Sit up with them and make a Noise and break the Lords day like the[y] —— this bein October I hope as we have a fair wind that we will be at the Cape in the course of a few day .

Munday the 22d October-was taking very ill in the night and have been very ill all this day —— the doctor gave me Som Stuff which did me a great dele of good —— Mr. Faddy went on board the Charlott according to the orders of Friday the 19 for which See the orderly Book —— Capt M went on Shore and Returned to dinner —— the doctor went on board the Scarborough to dinner —— much better than I was in the morning —— Lieut Sharp came on board to See me and Staid Tea.

EXCERPTS FROM DIARY OF LEUTENANT RALPH CLARK
OF THE FIRST FLEET

March the 9 1787-March with the detachment from the Barracks to the dock Yard at ten in the morning and Embark on board the Friendship Transport with Captain Lieutenant Meredith and 2d. Lieut Faddy 2 Sergeants 3 Corporals 1 Drummer 36 Privates 9 Women and Children — never did a poor Criminal goe to meet the [unknown] with greater reluctance than I leave the best of Woman and Sweetest of Boys — god out of his gracious goodness my leaving them may turn out to our advantage — never did poor Mortal feel himself So unhappy as I doe at this present moment — I wish to god that I was Returning home again to the best of her Sex — Oh What goodness dose She my belovd Betsey posses She is come on board to Stay with her fond Clark Untill Mr. Faddy Returns on board to Relieve me

March the 12-Received on board Yesterday Male and Female Convicts with Children — can never forgive the Unkindness of Capt M[eridith?] in refusing me leave to Sleep out of the Ships last night — oh did he love as well as I doe he would never have Refused me

March the 13 at Sea-Oh Gracious God What a task have I gone throu last night in taking leave of the dearest and best of Wives and not Seing my Boy — god grant them health and welfare is the most Sincer wishes of ane affectioned husband and fond father — oh when ever I am Restord to them again will never leave them — Bless them Both

May the 13th. 1787-5 oClock in the Morning The Sirius made the Signal for the whole fleet to get under Way, O gracious god Send that we may put in to Plymouth or Torbay in our Way down Channell that I may See my dear and fond affectioned Alicia and our Sweet Son before I leave them for this long long absents — Oh almighty god hier my prayer and grant me this request — Satt down and wrot a few lines to my Tender Betsey, and sent them by the pilot to put into the Post office, what makes me so happy this day is it because that I am in hopped the fleet will put in to Plymt. — Oh my fond heart lay still for you may be disappointed I trust in god I will not.

Sunday the 29 July-a very fine Breeze and as fair as it can blow — the Supply Lieut Ball haild use and informed use to keep a good look out for in the track that we are now going ther is ane Island laid down which the[y] dont know wher abouts it is — all well on board the Supply — Capt. Walton kild a very fine hogg and Sent use a loin which is very good of him — hope Soon to be into port wher we may have fresh Beff again — open the case of my dr. Belovd Betseys pictour and gave it a hunder kiss dear Sweet woman for herself and my dr. Boy — latte. ob in to day 19.32 S the convict woman finished the pair of Trousers that I gave her to make and the[y] fit very well — the commondor made the Signal to come and See the Longe. by his time pice which is 33.12 West — a very large [*] came close in board the Ship — a great number of flying fish came on board in the morning Watch

Alfred Charles Pratt – Millet Broom Manufacturer- Adelaide Street, was born in Croydon, England, in 1851, and came to the colony with his parents in 1882. After leaving school he commenced farming pursuits in the Hunter district, in which he continued for about twenty years. Whilst so engaged, he commenced in a small way the making of brooms, and, finding it successful, gave up farming and started the manufacture on an extensive scale in 1882. He has since carried on with pronounced success, using from thirty-five to forty tons of millet per annum, and giving constant employment to eight hands. The millet is grown in the district, and brings the growers from £20 to £24 per ton; but the factory of Mr Pratt, besides benefiting farmers, has been the means of starting a broom handle in the town. Our subject is a member of the I.O.O.F., was married at Raymond Terrace in 1879, and is the father of four children living. The following are the prizes which Mr Pratt has taken for his manufactures:- First and second prizes at the Maitland Exhibition of 1886; first prize at Singleton, 1886; first and second prizes at the Maitland Exhibition in 1887; and first at Singleton the same year; first prizes at the Adelaide International Exhibition of 1887; Raymond Terrace, 1887; and first and second prizes at the Maitland Exhibition of 1888

**From Aldine Centennial History of NSW. 1888 by
W.F.MORRISON.**

PRATT: The death occurred recently of Mr. Alfred C. Pratt, who was some years ago, well known in the Raymond Terrace district, being a member of the firm of Pratt and Warley, Broom Manufacturers, who carried on business in Raymond Terrace for some years, but whose factory was destroyed by fire. Mr. Pratt, with Mr. Warley went to the Richmond River, and purchased land at Rous, and engaged in dairying. Later Mr. Pratt and his sons purchased land at Nimbin and it was at the latter place that Mr. Pratt usually made his home. The deceased had enjoyed good health for the major portion of his life, but was ailing for a few months before his death. He was a member of the well known Pratt family who formerly resided on Nelsons Plains.
R.T.E. 27 June 1929

QUOTES FROM [Ronald Reagan](#)
All the waste in a year from a nuclear power plant can be stored under a desk.

Going to college offered me the chance to play football for four more years.

Exert from MAITLAND MERCURY JULY 1889

THE REPAIR OF BELMORE BRIDGE.

(To the Editor of the Maitland Mercury.)

SIB,-It is now nearly three weeks since the Belmore Bridge was closed against day traffic, as per advertisement in the Maitland Mercury, and practically nothing has been done. At the present rate 1890 will find the work unfinished. Other similar structures have been repaired at night. Why not have this also performed with night labour? Residents of Bolwarra and the outlying towns are compelled to use Pitnacree Bridge as a means of transit to and from West Maitland. For nearly two years the planking on the roadway was- a dis- grace and positive danger. Now we are to be subjected to another serious delay in performing the necessary repairs to put this structure in a passable condition. The loss in business to the trading community, as well as the annoyance to the residents on the Bolwarra side, compels me to ask a place for this correspondence in your columns.

No other community in New South Wales would suffer such treatment; and if no voice is raised to demand our rights, there is no telling how long we may have to submit to such neglect.

Yours very truly,

JOHN ROURKE

' Bolwarra House, West Maitland, July 15, 1889.

[We endorse what Mr. Rourke says about the tardy manner in which this work of repair is being done,-a manner which to us is inexplicable, seeing that the timber is all ready. The Government stroke is at all times irritating to energetic men, but it becomes something more than irritating when its consequences-are delay and inconvenience and loss of trade. We hope this reference to the grievance will infuse a little life into the operations at the bridge.-ED. M. M.]



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Journals from the First Fleet

The State Library holds the world's largest collection of original First Fleet journals and correspondence. Of the eleven known journal manuscripts, nine are held in the Mitchell Library and Dixson Library collections, State Library of New South Wales.

Of the contemporary records which survive documenting the First Fleet, the original, private manuscript journals written by those who actually sailed with the expedition occupy a central place.

The manuscript journals held by the State Library are written by John Hunter, Second Captain and Philip Gidley King, Second Lieutenant; William Bradley, First Lieutenant; Jacob Nagle, a seaman; and George Worgan, surgeon, all serving on the *Sirius*; Ralph Clark, Second Lieutenant of Marines on the *Friendship*; James Scott, Sergeant of Marines on the *Prince of Wales*; John Easty, private Marine on the *Scarborough*; and Arthur Bowes Smyth, surgeon on the *Lady Penrhyn*.

All give insights into shipboard life, the convicts, officers and crew, ports of call, discipline, injuries and deaths and daily life in the colony.

Ralph Clark (1755? - 1794)

Promoted First Lieutenant in February 1789 in New South Wales, Ralph Clark had undertaken the voyage to New South Wales in the hope of gaining promotion. During the voyage he was attached to the *Friendship*, one of the convict transports for female prisoners.

Clark's journal is a particularly personal account of the First Fleet, filled with his dreams, fears, homesickness and his longing for his wife, Betsey Alicia, and their young son. The facts of Clark's life are few and elusive. We know his birthday – 30 March – because he mentions it in his diary, but we do not know the precise year of his birth though it was around 1755. While in New South Wales, Clark formed a relationship with a convict woman, Mary Branham, with whom he had an illegitimate daughter born in 1791.

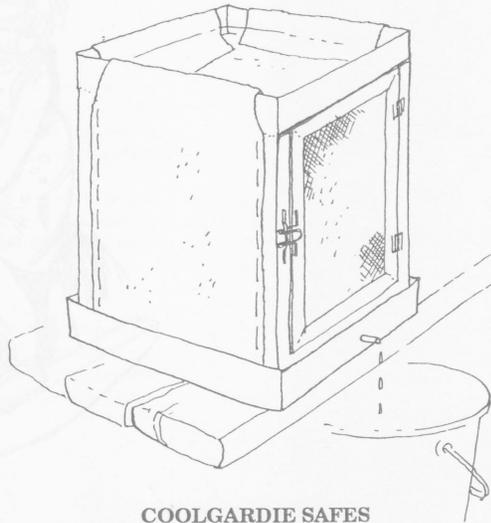
Clark Island in Sydney Harbour was named for him. While in New South Wales he was known for his empathy with the local indigenous people.

He returned to England in 1792 on the *Gorgon*. By the end of 1794, the Clark family was dead. Betsey Alicia died giving birth to a stillborn child. Clark was fatally wounded in service at a French outpost on 18 June. His nine year old son, serving as a volunteer on the same ship as his father, died of yellow fever on 29 June.

Betsey's family preserved Clark's journal until 1914 when it was acquired by the Library.

From

www.sl.nsw.gov.au/discover_collections/history_nation/terra_australis/journals/clark/index.html



COOLGARDIE SAFES

Not so many years ago bush folk had only the Coolgardie safe to keep the milk and butter cool in, and for the most part it did its job remarkably well. There are many patterns of safes, but they all work on the same principle, which is to keep the air around the food cool by evaporating water.

The framework of the safe was made from galvanised iron, with simple hinged door and a wire latch, the whole affair being about 700 mm high. The top of the safe was made in the form of a reservoir and it sat in a shallow trap with a drip pipe attached to it.

The sides and back of the safe were made of towelling stitched to the frame by means of holes in the metal. This towelling extended right up the sides and over into the reservoir, which was filled with water.

The water saturated the cloth, and slowly soaked down through it, at the same time cooling the interior. When the water reached the bottom it dripped out through the small pipe and was caught in a bucket.

Every so often, depending on the wind and temperature, the reservoir would have to be refilled, and this was the sole amount of maintenance needed.

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from “A Field Guide to Australian Traditional Bush Crafts”
by Ron Edwards.

SECRETARY’S REPORT FOR 2010

The year has been busy and productive, with a few hiccups along the way.

Fundraising is an essential part to our program, and some good ideas were implemented throughout the year. The progressive dinner was an excellent way of bringing people together to enjoy good food, and plenty of chat, and a repeat is planned for this year. The bus trip to Wollombi took in the sights, including the Museum and the cemetery, with some delicious scones and wine to try along the way. The Christmas in July Raffle, organized by Elaine was, again a success. Market Day is a big event to organize, and the Committee decided that, with less members able to help out on the day, that instead of having one large market day, that a number of smaller ones will be held throughout the year for 2011. Going to the movies to see “Tomorrow When the War” began proved to be a successful event, and so it is hoped to repeat this for this year.

Port Stephens Council Cultural Fund provided the funds which allowed the production of a new brochure to advertise Sketchley Cottage, and is now available at the Cottage, and at various venues across the local area, with the hope of building the number of visitors to the complex. The re-establishment of the Raymond Terrace Historical Walk has begun with the assistance of another grant from the Council. Next week the Museum will be painted, and the verandah posts on the Cottage will be replaced thanks to a grant received from NSW State Government – Community Building Partnerships. The waterproofing of the Museum by painting will ensure the longevity of the heritage items it contains.

The Research room at the local library continues under the direction of Elaine, Moira with their enthusiastic band of helpers. This year has seen new helpers, a new cupboard to hold microfilm, a new photocopier and soon, a new computer, all to assist with the family history research.

Bill and Jean Spencer, who were such stalwarts for the Society, moved away from the Terrace due to ill health – sadly Bill passed away during the year – and it has been difficult to continue the hard work that they were able to apply in order to keep the Cottage in a good

standard of repair. Maitland Community Service Workers have been to the Cottage on many occasions throughout the year, and the Society is very grateful for the hard work that they have put in. The bricks in the courtyard had, over time, become uneven. All of these were taken up, and re-laid – a very big job. Hunter High students, who took part in the Fiesta project last year, gave some valuable time to help keep the grounds in order, during the cooler months of the year.

Maintenance to the Cottage generally takes place on Mondays, from 9am-1pm. If you are able to spare some time, or know somebody who can help out, it would be greatly appreciated.

Sketchley Cottage continues to open each Sunday, 10am-3pm. There have been some additions to the Cottage collection, and new exhibits of textiles installed. There is a small, but dedicated band of volunteers who give their time, on Sundays to ensure the continuance of this important contact with the public. The number of volunteers on the list this year is less than there were last year, thus making it more demanding. If you can give some time to this important activity, it would be of great assistance. Society members wear the new t-shirts bearing the society logo to present a professional face. A new activity is being tried this year to help bring more people in to the Cottage, where a different community group will be invited on the last Sunday of the month to enjoy a sausage sizzle and a tour of the cottage.

Various learning opportunities have been taken up by members with their attendance at workshops and Conferences. Trish Harris travelled to Galong, near Canberra to attend a week-end conference for volunteers, learning some new things, and showcasing our Society by presenting an item about the Moxey Gown, which is an important part of our collection. Our textile collection was also the focus of the Powerhouse Workshop held in Raymond Terrace in December. Sue, Boris and Moira were instrumental in organizing this workshop which was designed to inform museum volunteers on the process of listing items held in their collections on the Australian Dress Register.

With the progression of time, it is becoming more difficult to maintain the activities of the Society, as we all live busy lives, and also, for many members, health becomes more of an issue. An aim for the coming year for the Society must be to try and boost the numbers of volunteers.

I will not stand for the position of Secretary this year, as I feel that I have done as much as I can at this point. I have enjoyed the opportunity to take on the challenge. It has given me a much greater understanding of the workings of the Society. We must all keep focused on the aims of the Society and all keep working in a cooperative and encouraging manner to ensure that the good achievements of the past years are maintained, and also keep looking to the needs of the future, which will keep the Society sustainable. Thanks to everyone who has helped throughout the year by donating their precious time and resources in whatever way that they are able.

I wish everyone a year full of success, health and peace.

Faye Clark
February 2011.

Plato

- Courage is knowing what not to fear.
- Better a little which is well done, than a great deal imperfectly.
- Cunning is but the low mimic of wisdom.
- Death is not the worst that can happen to men.

Helen Keller

I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish small tasks as if they were great and noble.

John Steinbeck

It has always been my private conviction that any man who puts his intelligence up against a fish and loses had it coming.

